

Kingston-Upon-Hull
(Town Point)
Kitts Hummock Rd.
Dover vicinity
Kent County
Delaware

HABS No. DE-175

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PHOTOGRAPHS . . .

MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL (Town Point)

HABS No. DE-175

Location: 1.4 miles south of Kitts Hummock Road, 1.9 miles east of junction of Routes 113 and 9, Dover vicinity, Kent County, Delaware.

Present Owner: Delaware Wild Lands, Inc.

Present Use: Vacant.

Statement of Kingston-upon-Hull is important as an example of the best quality of early eighteenth-century Delaware brickwork. Historically, the house is associated with Nathaniel Luff and the Dickinson family.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Early eighteenth century. Although a survey dated 20 February 1677/78 of "the Land of John Briggs and Mrs. Mary Phillips whereon they now Dwell" indicates a "Dwelling house" on or near the site of the present building, it is thought that this building was not built until after 1700. (Duke of York Record, pp. 46-47)
2. Architect: None Known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following chain of title traces that part of the original Kingston-upon-Hull tract on which the dwelling, also known as "Brookdale," is located.

1671 17 June. Confirmation of a patent to George Whale by Francis Lovelace. Quitrent of four bushels. (Duke of York Record, pp. 148-149). After Whale's death, the land escheated. (New York Colonial Documents, XII, 527-528).

1677/ 20 February. Survey of Kingston-upon-Hull, for John
78 Briggs and Mary Phillips by Walter Wharton, made by virtue of a warrant issued after the fact (12 March 1677/78) by the court at Whorekill. The survey was returned to court on 12 March 1677/78. (Duke of York Record, pp. 46-47).

1678 14 August. Patent granted by Edmund Andros to John Briggs and Mary Phillips for a quitrent of five bushels. (Duke of York Record, pp. 182-183).

- 1679 17 June. Mary Phillips assigned her rights to and interest in Kingston-upon-Hull to John Briggs. (Kent County Deed Book B1, 1st. pp. 116-118).
- 1686 20 Second Month (old style). Sale by John Briggs to William Frampton for 60,000 pounds tobacco, paid in installments until 1691. If Frampton or his heirs neglected to make payments in the manner agreed to, Briggs or his heirs were permitted to reenter upon it and to regain possession. (K. C. Deed Book B1, 1st, pp. 116-118).
- 1688/ 24 February. Kingston-upon-Hull released to John Briggs
89 by Richard Basnett, administrator of the estate of William Frampton, in accordance with the conditional deed. (K. C. Deed Book C1, p. 19).
- n.d. Memorandum by William Berry. On 24 February 1688/89 John Briggs reentered upon and regained possession of Kingston-upon-Hull. (K. C. Deed Book B1, 1st, pp. 116-118).
- 1688 26 Twelfth Month (old style). John Briggs sold his plantation to Richard Basnett for 60,000 pounds tobacco, which was paid that day. (K. C. Deed Book C1, p. 20).
- 1689 6 April. Memorandum. The 490 acres of Kingston-upon-Hull were delivered by John Briggs to Richard Basnett "by turf and twig" in the presence of six witnesses. (K. C. Deed Book C1, p. 19).
- 1700 12 April. Elizabeth Basnett, widow of Richard, sold the plantation to Stephen Nowell for 250 pounds silver of the province of Pennsylvania. The grant was to be legally binding on her, her heirs, and the heirs of both William Frampton (her first husband) and Richard Basnett. (K. C. Deed Book C1, p. 256).
- 1701 19 July. Fifty acres of the tract, but not containing the dwelling, were sold by Stephen Nowell to Robert French for a "competent sum of money." (K. C. Deed Book C1, p. 263).
- 1712 1-2 January. Thomas Frampton sold Kingston-upon-Hull to Abraham Bickley. According to this deed, William and/or Elizabeth Frampton had owned it at the time of their death and it descended to Thomas as their son and heir. (K. C. Deed Book E1, pp. 38-39).
- 1712 13 January. George Nowell (an heir of Stephen Nowell) sold 50 acres of Kingston-upon-Hull which did not include the house to Abraham Donaldson for £22.10. (K. C. Deed Book E1, pp. 119-121).

- 1712 17 January. Thomas Frampton sold all the lands of his parents in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware to Abraham Bickley for 5s. (New Jersey Deed Book AAA12, pp. 434-435).
- 1712 2 February. A further transfer of unspecified lands, including some in Delaware, from Thomas Frampton to Abraham Bickley for £300. Frampton claimed to have obtained the land "by descent from his late father and mother or one of them, or by form and virtue of some good conveyance of assurance in law," and that he had "good right lawful and absolute power and authority in himself to bargain sell grant and devise" this property. (N.J. Deed Book AAA12, pp. 437-439).
- 1715 27 September. Indenture to "Better to Enable Abraham Bickley to Grant Release and Convey the Tract of Land herein after mentioned" (Kingston-upon-Hull) to George Nowell. Nowell is to lease the plantation for one year at a rent of 5s. (K. C. Deed Book E1, pp. 37-38).
- 1715 28 September. Abraham Bickley sold the plantation to George Nowell for £200. The agreement states that Bickley was "seized of a Good Perfect Estate" and that he "hath good and Lawful authority to Grant Bargain and Sell the Same." (K. C. Deed Book E1, pp. 38-39). With this transaction the title was cleared.
- 1716 26 October. Sixty-four acres of Kingston-upon-Hull which adjoined the Town Point tract were sold by George Nowell to Nathaniel Hunn. Nowell retained the house and land surrounding it. (K. C. Deed Book E1, pp. 230-233).
- 1730 18 February. Will of George Nowell probated. Fifty acres of Kingston-upon-Hull were given to his cousin, Sarah Cook. The remainder of the estate and the mansion house were bequeathed to his wife, Margaret. (K. C. Will Book H1, p. 13).
- 1742 8 January. Survey and division of George Nowell's land according to his will. Sarah Cook's land was "convenient to the improvement made in the North East End" by her father. (K. C. Deed Book O1, p. 42).
- 1763 11 February. Margaret Rodney, widow of George Nowell, conveyed the remaining 291 acres of Kingston-upon-Hull to her son-in-law, Caleb Luff, in return for a guarantee of £30 per year for the remainder of her life. (K. C. Deed Book Q1, pp. 147-148).

- 1773 8 January. Tripartite agreement between Caleb Luff, his son Nathaniel, and Margaret Rodney. C. Luff reconveyed Kingston-upon-Hull and the adjoining land he had purchased to Rodney, but he was permitted to continue using it. After his death the land would pass to N. Luff, (K. C. Deed Book VI, p. 88). This would insure that N. Luff inherited the land; Rodney did not approve of her son-in-law's planned second marriage. (Journal of the Life of Nathaniel Luff, pp. 10-11).
- 1781 23 March. Will of Margaret Rodney probated. Her entire estate was bequeathed to Nathaniel Luff. (K. C. Will Book LL, p. 226).
- 1782 Caleb Luff died; his son inherited Kingston-upon-Hull. (Journal of the Life of Nathaniel Luff, p. 31).
- 1796 23 March. Kingston-upon-Hull, now consisting of 423 acres, was sold by Nathaniel Luff to John Dickinson. The cost, including that paid for other tracts of land, was £2500. (K. C. Deed Book E2, pp. 255-256).
- 1808 7 March. Will of John Dickinson probated. His lands in Kent County were granted to his daughter, Sally Norris Dickinson. (New Castle Wills, Archives).
- 1855 31 October. Will of Sally Norris Dickinson probated. The real estate in Kent County inherited from her father was to be equally divided among her nieces and nephews: Mary Norris Logan, Elizabeth Betton, Gustavus George Logan, and John Dickinson Logan. (K. C. Will Book S1, pp. 306-322).
- 1858 9 February. Survey and division of the lands of Sally Norris Dickinson. The portion upon which Kingston-upon-Hull stands was granted to John Dickinson Logan, who renamed the farm "Brookdale." (K. C. Record J. D., pp 23-29; Small Mss. Collection (Miller)).
- 1925 15 December. Will of Algernon Sydney Logan probated. The portion of his estate which included Brookdale was equally divided between his wife, Mary W. Logan, and his son, Robert R. Logan. The American Anti-Vivisection Society was to receive Robert's moiety after his death. (K. C. Will Book P2, pp. 193-204).
- 1933 7 February. Will of Mary W. Logan probated. Her property, including the "farm in Delaware," was bequeathed to her son Robert R. Logan. (K. C. Will Book T2, pp. 5-11).

- 1956 28 June. Will of Robert W. Logan probated. His one-half interest in "my farms in Kent County, Delaware" and other specified property was bequeathed to the American Anti-Vivisection Society. (K. C. Will Book M3, pp. 202-204).
- 1958 15 January. Sale by the American Anti-Vivisection Society of approximately 2,000 acres and the house standing on the Kingston-upon-Hull tract to John Everett Lofland for \$10. This includes some land Algernon Sydney Logan purchased from other heirs of Sally Norris Dickinson. (K. C. Deed Book T21, p. 136).
- 1967 4 December. John Everett Lofland sold the entire tract purchased from the American Anti-Vivisection Society for \$195,000. (K. C. Deed Book 25B, p. 80).

4. Alterations and Additions: The house was constructed in three phases: a two-room and central hall main portion, a one-room kitchen, and a frame second story which covers both the kitchen and the main structure.

The original dwelling was a three-bay brick structure with a basement below. At an early date the southeast wall was removed and the building extended to make a larger center room and to add a kitchen. This addition is also of brick.

A frame second story was added in the first half of the nineteenth century. An insurance policy of 1858 describes Kingston-upon-Hull as a "two story frame & brick dwelling 19x56 ft. The first story brick. The second story frame, with cellar under one half." At this time the house was insured for \$2,250; a frame smoke house (16'x16') with a brick oven, a 6'x8' frame milk house, and a frame barn and stables (30'x30') were also insured. The total value of the structures on the Brookdale farm was \$4,350.

In 1888 Algernon Sydney Logan ordered a 10'x14' cistern sunk near the barnyard. It was cemented and covered. Its purpose was to catch the waste water running off from the pond; the water would be raised in a tank by means of a windmill and pump and then distributed in sprinkling wagons.

B. Historical Events and Personages:

The first three owners of Kingston-upon-Hull were active in public affairs. John Briggs signed the petition for the creation of St. Jones County and took its first census in 1680. He was a member of the first assembly under the Penn government and also served in it from 1682-1685. He was commissioned as a justice of the peace in 1684. William Frampton, a merchant who built one of the earliest wharves in Philadelphia, was a representative to the Provincial Council from Kent County. Richard Basnett was active in government in New Jersey.

In the late 1720s George Nowell maintained a general store at his home. Located on the riverfront, Kingston-upon-Hull served as an important landing. Letters could be posted from Nowell's house.

Although no petitions for a tavern license have been located, it appears that Margaret Rodney kept a tavern at Kingston-upon-Hull. Her grandson reported inheriting "about forty or fifty pounds of silver plate, the product of her hardearned labor as a tavern keeper."

Nathaniel Luff is most significant as one of the earliest Delawareans who published his autobiography (1848). During his residence at Kingston-upon-Hull he briefly allowed Methodists to hold services there, although neither he nor his wife were Methodists.

There is no evidence that John Dickinson or any of his descendents ever resided at Kingston-upon-Hull. At the end of the nineteenth century Algernon Sydney Logan visited the farm frequently; he was interested in improving the farm and stayed at Brookdale while hunting and fishing. He later described the countryside and its people in his 1900 novel Amy Warren.

Kingston-upon-Hull is not the site of the first meeting of the county courts. That meeting took place at Town Point, the residence of Edward Pack, who owned this tract jointly with John Briggs. Briggs did not become a justice of the peace until 1684, while Pack was appointed in 1680. Furthermore, the 1678 patent to John Briggs and Mary Phillips mentions that their land adjoins Town Point. This error in identification can be traced to the Federal Writers' Project, Delaware: A Guide to the First State; it has subsequently been incorporated in other travel books and guides to historic houses. The illustrations and descriptions are of Kingston-upon-Hull, but it is called Town Point and identified as the site of county court sessions. The structure has become popularly known as Town Point. No buildings remain on the original Town Point tract.

Prepared by: Sally Schwartz
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1975

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is an example of the best quality early eighteenth-century Delaware brickwork. The house, originally one floor, had two significant additions.
2. Condition of Fabric: Poor.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 57'-7"x19'-6", four bays, rectangular, two stories with cellar and attic.
2. Foundations: Brick, English bond.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Lower floor is red brick, Flemish bond with glazed gray headers on the southwest and northwest facades, English bond on the northeast facade and a mixture of common bond on the southeast facade. There is a brick water table on the southwest, northwest, and northeast facades, stepped on the southwest and northeast. The water table on the southwest facade has a slotted brick top. The mortar joints have grapevine tooling. The upper floor, added at a later date, has clapboard siding that was painted at one time.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls on the first floor and wood frame construction on the second floor.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: There is a small wood porch on the northeast facade with a post on each side, wood floor, sealed ceiling and hip roof with asphalt shingles. This porch appears to be very recent. There is evidence of blocking for a large porch across the entire southwest facade and a larger porch than the existing one on the northeast facade.

Two steps on the northeast facade lead from an exterior door in the kitchen. There is a brick bulkhead on the northeast facade leading into the cellar. Brick steps partially remain in the bulkhead.

6. Chimneys: There are three brick chimneys, one on each end and one near the center of the house.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance on the southwest facade has a three-light-transom window and the door is boarded up. On the northeast facade directly opposite the main entrance is a matching entrance, also with a three-light transom window. There are boarded-up entrances directly opposite each other in the kitchen on both the southwest and northeast facades. Door frames are wood and doors are wood panel.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Wooden, single-hung windows have six-over-six-light sashes. One wooden paneled shutter is on the window in the west corner of the house. There is evidence that other shutters existed on the lower floor windows. There is a rowlock course over two windows on the southwest facade.

There is a segmental-arched opening to the cellar on the northeast facade that has been bricked up. Two segmental-arched openings to the cellar are on the southwest facade. Two segmental-arched windows on either side of the fireplace in the northwest wall have been filled in with brick.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof, ten-in-twelve slope, has asphalt shingles over wood shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Eaves are boxed in with crown molding at edge and cave molding at brick.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: There is a cellar under the original house on the northwest of the house, accessible only from the exterior through the bulkhead. There is an arched brick support on each end for the fireplace above. The cellar has an earth floor and in the center is a small brick pit, which probably contained a furnace. The cellar is divided into two rooms. There is a crawl space under the southeast section of the house.
- b. First floor: The northwestern, original portion of the house consisted of a center hall with a room on each side. There are fireplaces on the far walls. All of the openings on the southwest facade correspond to openings on the northeast facade.

The kitchen added on the southeast end is accessible from a door beside the fireplace in the center room as well as from doors to the exterior. Again, the door and window on the southwest facade correspond to identical openings on the northeast facade.

Access to the second floor is through an enclosed stairway next to the fireplace in the center room. Access to the second-floor southeasternmost room only is by a ladder stair next to the fireplace in the kitchen.

- c. Second floor: There are five bedrooms and a hall on the second floor. The hall runs across two bays of the northeastern side and the two rooms behind the hall have a window only on the southwestern side. The other three rooms run through the building with windows on both the northeastern and southwestern sides.

Access to the attic is by a stairway located above the central stairway to the first floor.

- d. Attic: The attic is unfinished and has a portion of the flooring removed. There are two chimneys, one in the center of each gable end with a small window on either side. There is a large, wooden storage box built in the center of the floor.
 2. Stairways: The stairway in the dining room has two open-string steps projecting into the room, then winding up through a doorway in an enclosed space. The stairway to the attic winds up from a doorway in the second-floor hall. The stair-ladder in the kitchen is closed string, open rise.
 3. Flooring: The flooring is wood planks. There is an earth floor in the cellar.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster walls and ceilings throughout the house with the exception of one partition on the second floor, which is vertical wood. The walls in the living room, entrance hall, and dining room are painted light green and the kitchen walls are painted ochre and pink. Ceilings in all rooms are white, except in the kitchen which is brown and red.
 5. Doorways and doors: Paneled wood doors have wood frames and trim.
 6. Special decorative features, trim and cabinetwork: There is a wood mantel and surround at the closed-up fireplace in the living room, and at the dining room fireplace. In the dining room there is a paneled, four-door cupboard on the end of the fireplace. The closets on the second floor are vertical, beaded wood with a large crown molding at the ceiling. There is a decorative wood door stop at the entrance doors in the entrance hall and some of the rooms on the second floor. Baseboards have a beveled top and a large toe molding.
 7. Mechanical equipment: There is a fireplace in the dining room and kitchen and all rooms have flue connections for room heaters. There is one sheetmetal duct leading from the cellar to the second floor, probably for heating, that has been blocked up. There is evidence of a probable furnace in the cellar, but no other ductwork. There is no evidence of any electrical connections.
- D. Site: The house faces southwest towards St. Jones Creek, surrounded by cultivated fields. It is approached from a tree-lined dirt lane to the rear of the house.

Prepared by: John P. White
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Historic American Buildings Survey
July 1975

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Plans: Kent County Mutual Insurance Company, Policy 800, briefly describes Kingston-upon-Hull.
- B. Deed Books: Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Kent County Court House, Dover, Delaware; State Archives, New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey; Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Hall of Records, Dover, Delaware.
- C. Will Books: Office of the Register of Wills, Kent County Court House, Dover, Delaware; State Archives, New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey; Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Hall of Records, Dover Delaware.
- D. Old Views: Photograph of "Brookdale" as a working farm in 1891 in Robert R. Logan, Biographical Sketch of Algernon Sydney Logan, and Algernon Sydney Logan, Vistas from the Stream, Vol. I.

E. Bibliography:

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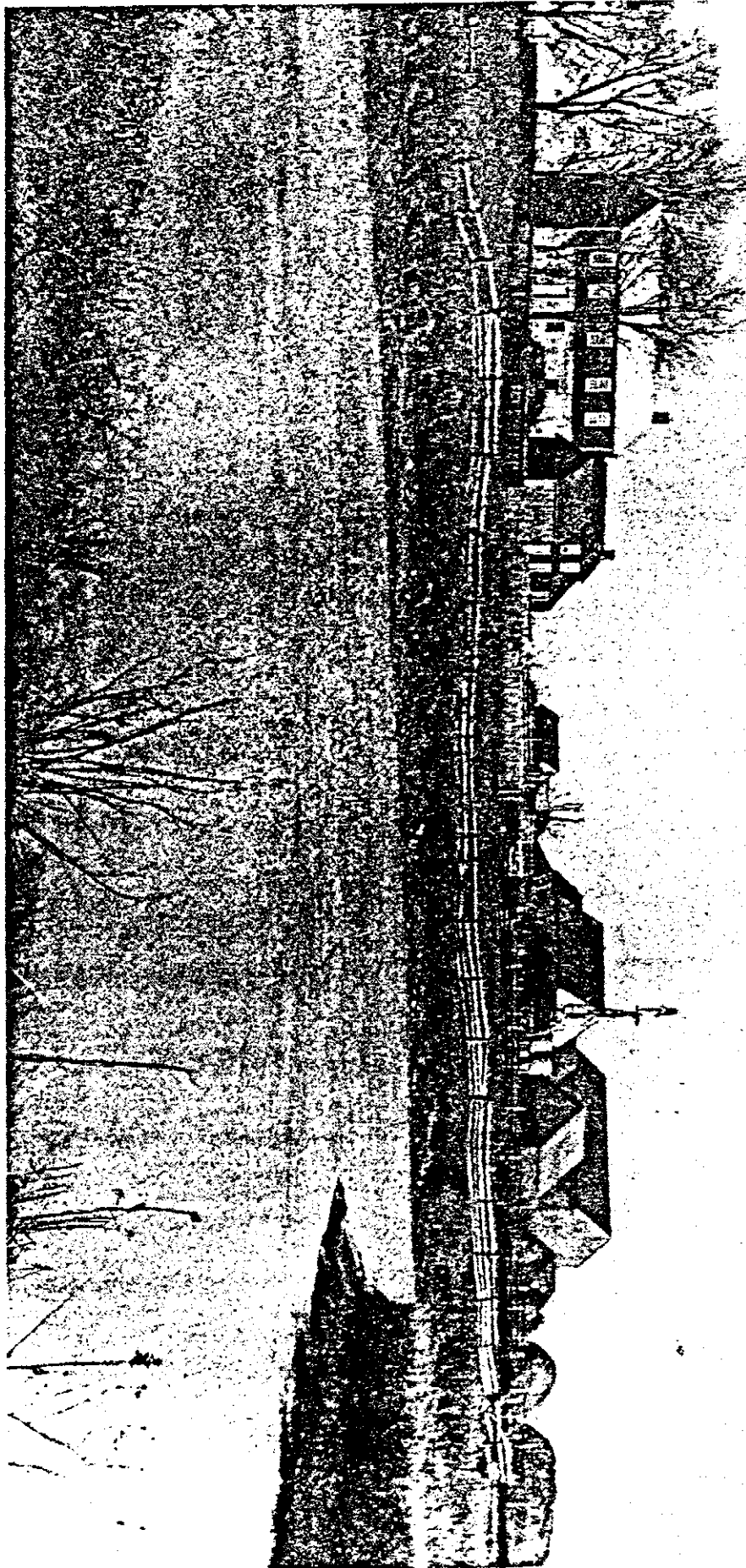
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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, State of Delaware, and was financed with funds provided by the State of Delaware. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1975 at the Historic American Buildings Survey Field Office, Dover, Delaware, by John P. White (Assistant Professor, Texas Tech University) Project Supervisor; James Stewart (University of Delaware), Sally Schwartz (Harvard University), Project Historians; Charles B. Tonetti (Syracuse University), Architect; Student Assistant Architects, Scott Barnard (University of Pennsylvania), Frederick K. Read (University of Notre Dame), and Mark T. Wellen (Texas Tech University). The written data were edited by Alison K. Hoagland, Historian, in the HABS office in January 1983.



"BROOKDALE," JONES' NECK, DEL.—1891